

U.S. Department of Education
2009 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) ☐ Elementary ☒ Middle ☐ High ☐ K-12 ☐ Other
☐ Charter ☐ Title I ☒ Magnet ☒ Choice

Name of Principal: Mrs. Carra King

Official School Name: Brandenburg Middle School

School Mailing Address:
626 Nickens Road
Garland, TX 75043-2499

County: Dallas State School Code Number*: 057-909-047

Telephone: (927) 926-2630 Fax: (972) 926-2633

Web site/URL: www.garlandisd.schools.net/brandenburg E-mail: CRKing@garlandisd.net

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Curtis Culwell

District Name: Garland ISD Tel: (972) 494-8201

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Scott Luna

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Original signed cover sheet only should be mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as USPS Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2008-2009 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.
6. The nominated school has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
- | | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 49 | Elementary schools |
| 13 | Middle schools |
| 0 | Junior high schools |
| 8 | High schools |
| 3 | Other |
| 73 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 9071

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 10162

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- ☐ Urban or large central city
☒ Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
☐ Suburban
☐ Small city or town in a rural area
☐ Rural

4. 12 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

 If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK			0	7	195	224	419
K			0	8	157	189	346
1			0	9			0
2			0	10			0
3			0	11			0
4			0	12			0
5			0	Other			0
6	149	213	362				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							1127

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
5 % Asian
21 % Black or African American
34 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
40 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % **Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 9 %

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	57
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	43
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	100
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	1143
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.087
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	8.749

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 4 %

Total number limited English proficient 45

Number of languages represented: 4

Specify languages:

Arabic, Shona, Philipino (Tagalog), Spanish

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 45 %

Total number students who qualify: 512

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-price school meals program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 8 %

Total Number of Students Served: 88

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>25</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>42</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>11</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>27</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>22</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>65</u>	<u>2</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
Total number	<u>84</u>	<u>9</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 17 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	96%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	96%	95%	96%	95%
Teacher turnover rate	11%	12%	15%	10%	12%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

Teacher turnover rate of 15% in 2005-2006 is attributed to teacher promotions to leadership positions within the district. These teachers were promoted due to their instructional expertise as demonstrated by the success of their students at Brandenburg. Replacing these three teachers in addition to the average turnover caused by the mobility of our community resulted in the higher than normal turnover rate.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2008 are doing as of the Fall 2008.

Graduating class size	0	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0	%
Enrolled in a community college	0	%
Enrolled in vocational training	0	%
Found employment	0	%
Military service	0	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0	%
Unknown	0	%
Total	100	%

PART III - SUMMARY

Our mission at Brandenburg Middle School is to provide a quality education that empowers students to achieve their highest potential through an integrated curriculum and “life-long” learning. We are committed to building high esteem and provide support to meet the needs of all students and staff members through the cooperation of our parents and community members. Programming is planned around the philosophy of educating the whole child by integrating technology, vocabulary development, literature, fine arts, and physical fitness throughout the traditional middle school academic curriculum. A special emphasis is placed on providing a positive learning environment in which students can fully explore their interests and develop their talents supported by a character education program and a standardized dress code.

The enriched program has met with much success. Students across the district may apply to attend Brandenburg and students in the neighborhood community may choose to attend. All students may enroll in a wide variety of enriched courses not offered at other middle schools in Garland ISD. The school has grown to approximately 1150 students with a diverse population of 40% White, 34% Hispanic, 21% African American, and 5% Asian/ Native American. Brandenburg has achieved “Recognized” status from the Texas Education Agency for the past 3 years based on student achievement scores. Brandenburg has also been honored as a “Gold Performance” school by TEA for gains in math, writing, reading, social studies, and attendance rates.

Greatly attributing to student success is the crucial relationship between teachers, parents, and the community. Teachers establish on-going communication with parents each year to exchange meaningful information, make suggestions, and foster support for student success. Parent volunteers work to support extra-curricular and academic programs. The PTA and interested community members provide the additional support necessary for educational assemblies and field trips which enhance the learning process for all students.

Another integral part of Brandenburg’s success is based on the importance of school and community service. The student council has 130 active members who plan and implement monthly school service projects ranging from campus beautification to teacher appreciation. The National Junior Honor Society with 55 members organizes community service projects in which any student may participate to help provide needed support within the area. Students have worked in the kitchen at homeless shelters, welcomed home soldiers returning from Iraq, and tutored students who needed individualized academic help. The STARS (Students Taking a Right Stand) club is made up of students who want to help their peers understand the negative impact of drugs, alcohol, and violence. Students make posters, perform skits, make announcements, and film videos all centered around the theme of saying “no” to peer pressure. All sixth graders participate in the GREAT program taught by the school resource officer. This program focuses on teaching students how to avoid gang activity, handle bullying, and developing good problem solving strategies as related to school and community.

Brandenburg Middle School continues to meet the daily challenges of educating 11- 14 year olds by providing opportunities for students to explore and learn not only in the core areas of curriculum but through a wide range of elective programs. Emphasis is placed on language acquisition, visual and performing arts, and physical fitness. These programs are designed to build the confidence and self-esteem of middle school learners while they are discovering and pursuing talents in preparation for high school.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Students at Brandenburg Middle School in the Garland Independent School District are administered the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) each spring. The TAKS test is a criterion-referenced state assessment which is used to measure student achievement in math and reading for grades 6-8, writing in grade 7, and science and social studies in grade 8. To meet the passing standard, students must make a scale score of 2100 (proficient). A scale score of 2400 denotes achievement at the commended level (advanced). Beginning in 2008, students in grade 8 who did not meet the standard in math and or reading were allowed to take a second or third test administration to meet the standard in order to be promoted to grade 9. If a student was not successful, a grade placement committee was convened to determine placement in grade 9 or retention in grade 8. A full explanation of the TAKS test and the Texas accountability system may be found on the Texas Education Agency website at www.tea.state.tx.us.

The TAKS data for the past 5 years indicates marked improvement in both reading and math with gains in each subgroup and overall campus performance. Significant gains were made in the number of students meeting the standard score as well as improvement at the commended level in both subject areas.

Reading achievement over the past 5 years has climbed steadily at all 3 grade levels. In grade 6 the met standard score has risen by 6 points to 96 % but the percentage of students scoring at the commended level has grown by 23 points from 38% to 61%. Significant gains were made in the economically disadvantaged subgroup with a dramatic improvement of 31 points at the commended level. In grade 7, scores grew from 82% to 95% of students who met the standard. Commended scores rose 24 points with marked gains in the Hispanic subgroup of 30 points. TAKS scores in grade 8 have improved from 87% of students meeting the standard to 99% meeting the standard score. Commended scores increased 45 points with notable improvement in the African American subgroup scoring from 0% to 62%. The achievement gap in grade 8 has virtually closed with at least 98% of each subgroup meeting the standard score. Even though reading scores are high with more than 90% of students meeting the standard, teachers focus on ways to promote student achievement at the commended level.

Huge gains have also been noted in the past 5 years in math across all 3 grade levels. In grade 6 overall student achievement rose 9 points along with an increase of 26 points at the commended level. The percentage of Hispanic students scoring at the commended level grew from 2% to 43%. In grade 7, math TAKS scores gained 16 points over the past 5 years growing from 73% of students meeting the standard to 89%. The number of students scoring at the commended level overall and in each subgroup has more than tripled over the past 5 years. TAKS scores in grade 8 made considerable improvement increasing by 26 points over 5 years. Hispanic students gained 40 points with 56% to 96% of students meeting the standard. African American students improved by 30 points with 58% to 88% of students meeting the standard score. Economically disadvantaged students climbed 40 points with 51% to 91% of students meeting the passing standard. A major focus in the area of math is to continue to work to close the gaps between White, Hispanic, and African American students.

The rigor of daily instruction in each classroom must meet the expectations for student mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills as well as focusing on individual student needs. Administrators and teachers are committed to studying the TAKS assessment data as they look for achievement trends and patterns with which to make sound instructional decisions.

2. Using Assessment Results:

An important part of Brandenburg's quest to improve student academic achievement is directly attributed to the time that is spent using student performance data to drive instructional decision-making. The instructional program and curriculum which is based on the learning objectives set forth by the standards of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills were designed to meet the learning needs of all students at the rigor appropriate for each grade level. Teachers and other staff members use the data collected from unit curriculum assessments, benchmarks, and the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills to determine the instructional focus needed for student success.

Data analysis of achievement scores by administrators and counselors begins in May for the next school year. Students who are in need of specialized intervention must be scheduled for remedial courses to build content specific skills and develop problem solving strategies.

Campus-wide data disaggregation is conducted each August during professional development. Staff members are asked to use achievement data to prioritize the learning needs of students by subpopulation, gender, grade, and subject area to build a framework to determine the integrated instructional focus of the campus.

Further data analysis is conducted by grade level subject area professional learning communities. Each PLC meets weekly to carefully plan instruction based on the specific data of the grade level and subject area collected from unit assessment and benchmark results. The members of the PLC work collaboratively to develop and implement an action plan which outlines the best instructional strategies and practices necessary for effective instruction and high student achievement. As part of each action plan, teachers must build in methods for differentiation of instruction as well as "reteach" activities to eliminate academic gaps and to promote higher achievement. The action plan also provides for a tutorial and mentoring program for all students who are not performing at the level necessary for student success.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

The staff of Brandenburg Middle School uses a variety of means to ensure that student performance is communicated to students, parents and the community throughout the school year. During new student orientation each August, students and parents are made aware of the many ways to stay abreast of each student's progress and achievement along with campus procedures and the student code of conduct.

Students are informed of their individual academic performance weekly. Each teacher posts student grades by identification number and returns graded assignments for review and correction. Teachers and counselors conference individually with students to review subject area grades and assessment scores to determine if any or additional interventions are needed and to make course selections. If students are consistently performing poorly, parents are invited to meet with counselors and teachers to develop an improvement plan.

Parents have daily access to the district on-line grade book to assist in parental monitoring of their child's grades. This technology enables parents and students to review progress on assignments, projects, curriculum assessments, and benchmarks together at home. Progress reports are sent home with students for parents to sign and return each 3 weeks. Report cards are mailed to parents each six weeks. Each semester the campus hosts a parent/teacher conference night so that parents and teachers may talk in person about performance concerns. Parents also have access to teacher e-mail addresses on the campus website to ease communication.

In February of each year, a copy of the Texas Education Agency School Report Card is sent to parents accompanied by a letter explaining the attached data and providing the address of the TEA website. The letter also urges parents to attend a community meeting on campus to review and explain the campus performance data. Community members who are not parents are invited to attend the meeting through announcements on the Garland ISD television station, the campus website, the PTA newsletter, and school marquee messages.

4. **Sharing Success:**

Brandenburg Middle School has been honored by *Texas Monthly* magazine as one of the “Best Public Schools” in Texas in 2006 and 2007 due consistent academic improvement. This honor along with our “Recognized” and Gold Performance status bestowed by the Texas Education Agency has prompted schools in our area of the state to question and examine our methods and practices. Teachers have worked collaboratively with teachers from other campuses in Region 10 to share best practices and develop new curriculum activities. At district professional learning community meetings, Brandenburg faculty present and work on curriculum alignment teams. They share the methods of the curriculum integration model that is used at Brandenburg to support student performance by providing a wide-range of learning connections and applications across the content areas.

Brandenburg has also developed several pilot programs to support special education, limited English proficient students, and at-risk students in the regular classroom. The strategies and results of these programs are shared across the district and have been presented at state conferences such as the Conference for the Advancement of Mathematics Teachers.

Student and staff success is shared in many ways as well. Academic, athletic, fine arts, attendance, and citizenship achievements are announced and celebrated each week. All A honor roll students are recognized and invited to a reception each grading period. A/B honor roll students are announced and names are posted each grading period. Students who excel during extra-curricular events are recognized during campus announcements and messages on the campus website. Citizenship awards for acts of kindness and civic duty are acknowledged monthly. Students and faculty honored with state and national awards are recognized with “Excellence Awards” by the Garland School Board.

Brandenburg consistently looks for opportunities to share our successes and recognize the accomplishments of our students and staff. As a “Blue Ribbon” school we will want to expand beyond our region and state to share our practices and methods to assist other schools and to learn from their successes as we continue to strive for improvement.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Brandenburg Middle School prides itself on providing a comprehensive educational experience based on a rigorous curriculum as prescribed in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills or TEKS. Each subject area has its own set of specific TEKS which guide curriculum development and instruction. Brandenburg provides three levels of rigor to best fit student needs. CBSE (Campus Based Special Education) classes offer students with learning disabilities content based instruction in a small group and individualized setting to help them achieve their highest potential and work toward grade level competency. Grade level courses provide appropriate grade level instruction in all core subject areas. Pre-Advanced Placement or honors courses are offered for higher achieving students who perform above grade level and who hope to gain high school credits and eventually college credit hours through the AP program. All courses are taught by highly qualified, dedicated teachers committed to student success. All teachers use a variety of instructional methods to ensure student learning and achievement including Robert Marzano's strategies and Bloom's Taxonomy.

Sixth grade students at Brandenburg are required to take developmental reading and English. Reading classes focus on critical reading skills, comprehension, and vocabulary development, and encourage a love of reading as a life long skill. The English classes target writing as an effective means of communication. The reading and English departments work closely to ensure that all ELA TEKS objectives are taught and mastered. The sixth grade social studies class provides an overview of world cultures. Students in grade six take a math course which builds on skills from elementary school and prepares them for the rigor of higher level mathematics courses. Sixth grade science enhances math skills as well as providing a strong foundation in scientific principles and earth science fundamentals. Physical education and health classes are required for all sixth grade students. These classes are built around a philosophy of healthy bodies and minds and how they work together to make a well rounded successful individual. Sixth grade students are also required to take two semesters of fine arts.

Seventh and eighth grade students are required to take courses in the same core subject areas as sixth grade students with the exception of reading if they are performing at or above grade level based on assessments from the previous year. English classes are focused on literature study, elements of great writing, and communicating effectively through the written word. Eighth graders who have been in honors classes may enroll in English I for high school credit. Seventh graders take a Texas History course to fulfill their social studies requirement, while eighth graders take U.S. History. Math curriculum continues to build on skills learned in previous classes, but students in seventh grade honors math receive an enriched curriculum with elements of Algebra to prepare them for the eighth grade Algebra I which is a high school course. Science in seventh and eighth grade is taught in a lab environment for both regulars and honors. Technology along with math and writing skills are important components of the lab process as students learn how to use the scientific method and process.

In addition to the state required schedule described above, students at Brandenburg Middle School are offered 45 electives. Electives provide for a wide range of courses such as technology, athletics, fine arts, and foreign languages.

Brandenburg offers foreign language courses in Spanish and Latin. This year 248 students participate in the foreign language program. Both courses are broken down into two yearly courses. A language lab is used for Spanish instruction to provide real-life application. Brandenburg is the only middle school in Garland ISD offering Latin as a foreign language. Latin provides a great foundation for vocabulary development through word part analysis in English and other classical languages.

Brandenburg Middle School places an emphasis on performing and visual arts. From writing scripts, running the light board, reciting Shakespeare, harmonizing and performing in professional settings, theater arts classes provide student with skills and experiences that they will use for a lifetime. The art department also offers a wide range of courses to provide opportunities for development and discovery of talents in drawing and painting, sculpture, and crafts and culture. The dance program offers classes to give students the opportunity to perform in ballet, modern, tap, jazz, and other genres. Music as a performing art is also addressed through our band, choir, and piano programs. Students involved in the music programs perform at a variety of festivals, competitions, and concerts.

Reading, writing, and math skills are integrated across all content areas of the curriculum including fine arts. Teachers provide connections to these foundations skills to support learning and establish relevance at all levels.

2b. (Secondary Schools) English:

Brandenburg Middle School's English language curriculum is centered on writing as an effective means of communication. In today's instant message society, it is essential for students to use their writing skills to communicate ideas effectively. The students study and analyze selected works of literature as a basis to improve and expand their own writing techniques. Proper grammar and conventions are taught as well as an enriched vocabulary development program using Greek and Latin roots. The state's TEKS objectives are taught with the seventh graders taking the TAKS Writing test in March. Students are expected to revise and edit a piece of writing and write their own reflective piece. All TEKS objectives are included in the district's online curriculum. This curriculum including instruction and resources is provided for all ELA teachers and is vertically aligned to ensure that each course of study builds on the previous level.

Reading skills focused on enhancing comprehension and vocabulary are also taught in all English classes as the students read and analyze selected literature. Students who are not reading at or above grade level are provided with a comprehensive reading program in grades seven and eight. These classes utilize the Read XL and Junior Great Books programs to practice fluency, build vocabulary, and develop comprehension skill to bring students up to grade level. The Junior Great Books series is specifically used to teach critical reading skills through the "shared inquiry" method. Students read literature and explore the elements of the text through thinking, pairing, and sharing with their peers. Teachers also use a variety of strategies including technology based computer programs, cooperative learning, and one on one individualized instruction.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

The mathematics department is committed to providing all students with a comprehensive math education. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills is the basis for the curriculum which is also provided online and vertically aligned. Assessments are given regularly to determine any gaps in learning. Real life applications are provided for students. For example, students learn how to compile information into a spreadsheet and create graphs and charts using specific data. The scope and sequence of the math courses are such that each course builds on the skills acquired in the previous class. A variety of strategies are utilized to enhance student learning such as manipulatives which are used to help students who need concrete examples for abstract mathematics principles. Recently the campus acquired Quizdom, a wireless remote system, which allows students to engage in math games and activities to enhance student engagement and learning in the classroom. Other technologies used in our math department include software packages such as PLATO, Texas Web Tutor, and Study Island. These types of software not only aid in students' understanding of mathematics, but they also increase their understanding of computer applications.

The main goal of mathematics at the middle school level is to encourage students' development of problem solving skills. Students are challenged to work on problems that require them to use the information learned in class and apply it to new situations to create a solution. Through this, the emphasis is placed on how math

applies to real life and how it can impact the future. Our school's mission is to provide a quality education that empowers students to achieve their highest potential through an integrated curriculum and life-long learning. Teaching students to break down and systematically work through a problem using these problem solving strategies is a skill that will serve them well in the future.

4. Instructional Methods:

Brandenburg Middle School differentiates instruction to meet the diverse needs of our students to ensure students are working up to their potential. The ESL (English as a Second Language) program works closely with our limited English proficient students in small, leveled classes using certified teachers who serve as interventionists. Teachers work closely with these students in math, science, and social studies to help them achieve their academic goals and overcome language barriers. The ESL program also offers an extended day program in which students work in small groups with sponsor teachers to enhance the knowledge acquired in the regular classroom. Students who stay for the after school programs are provided transportation by the district.

Special education students receive individualized instruction in the classroom and in other programs. A learning lab is available to special needs students so that they may receive one on one content instruction and help with classroom assignments. It is also a place where testing can be done in a nurturing and quiet environment. Our special education department also offers an after school program that focuses on the academic and behavioral needs of each student. Classroom teachers modify instruction as prescribed in each student's individual education plan, and the learning lab staff and content mastery teachers are there to lend support to the students and teachers alike.

The at-risk student population is one that requires support as well. An intramural soccer program was developed to motivate at-risk students and foster an attitude of teamwork. Students must maintain a passing grade in all subjects and conduct themselves appropriately to participate in the program. The students are taught athletic skills as well as how to work with others and are encouraged to show good sportsmanship. Another support for the at-risk population is a school-wide mentoring program. The mentoring program pairs each staff member with four or five at-risk students. The mentors and students work on study skills and testing strategies. Mentors also monitor the student's academic success and collaborate with the parents to promote student achievement.

5. Professional Development:

Campus leaders provide staff development on issues impacting the performance of students and teachers. The administration works with the staff to ensure that professional development needs are being met. For example, the faculty participated in a campus-wide book study of Robert Marzano's *Classroom Instruction that Works* to ensure teachers use the most effective instructional strategies based on current research. Another example of meaningful professional development is the on-going training designed to show teachers how best to utilize technology to engage students during instruction and to use as a tool for analysis of student achievement data. If there is a school-wide need, the principal will provide training on specific topics. If there is a more specialized need, she will provide funding for teachers to attend content area workshops or professional development opportunities off campus. Access to numerous professional development videos through PD360, an online library of educational titles, is available to all staff members.

For more specific content area professional development, the teachers in each subject area meet in monthly PLC (Professional Learning Communities) groups to discuss and share new information. The instructional support staff requests input from teachers prior to the meeting to determine the areas of need and either present information themselves or solicit teachers to bring helpful strategies to share. This needs-based professional development is most effective in enhancing student learning because it maintains a specific focus related to classroom teachers and what they can use to help current students.

New teachers require extra professional development as they progress through their first year of teaching. To support these teachers we utilize the KEDGE (Keeping Educators for Decades: Good for Education) Program which pairs new teachers with master teachers. Master teachers are trained and supported by KEDGE mentors who keep abreast of the needs of the new teachers and provide feedback to the master teachers. This support system is critical for retaining highly qualified teachers through their first few challenging years in the classroom.

6. School Leadership:

The principal of Brandenburg Middle School takes a very hands-on approach to leadership. She is aware of all issues pertaining to students and staff. She is an instructional leader who oversees academic programming including instruction, intervention programs, and discipline to provide a positive learning environment. The principal appropriates resources based on a yearly needs assessment. Using projected student numbers, testing data and input from the staff, she works to develop a budget that will adequately meet the resource needs of students and staff while being a responsible steward of district and campus funds.

Helping the principal in this endeavor are two assistant principals. Each assistant principal is responsible for specialized areas of curriculum, textbook and resource management, and maintenance of the facility. Each assistant principal works closely with teachers in areas where they have the most expertise. For example, one of the assistant principals has over ten years of experience teaching math at the middle school level. She supervises the math department and works closely with the department chair to ensure that math teachers have adequate resources and the support they need to help students succeed.

Also serving as instructional leaders are the department heads. They work closely with the administration and the Campus Improvement Team to ensure that all students are receiving proper instruction in each subject area. They consult with their supervising administrator and CIT to discuss goals and relevant data, and in turn, meet with the department to develop and implement an action plan for student success. District subject area coordinators and instructional support teachers also assist department heads and teachers with curriculum management issues.

Professional Learning Communities are implemented at all levels on the campus. Principals, departments, grade level teams, and grade level subject areas all meet regularly to discuss issues and ways to best meet the needs of students. This collaboration is not only effective in opening lines of communication, but also helps to maintain positive relationships which are important in the school environment.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Texas Education Agency

Publisher: Texas Education Agency with Pearson Assessments

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	88	79	80	77	79
Commended	49	31	24	27	23
Number of students tested	382	350	377	326	323
Percent of total students tested	99	95	97	98	93
Number of students alternatively assessed		12			16
Percent of students alternatively assessed		3			5
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	82	71	74	73	59
Commended	39	22	16	19	20
Number of students tested	175	153	170	138	114
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African American					
Met Standard	84	69	75	62	61
Commended	46	25	13	11	14
Number of students tested	67	59	77	73	70
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Met Standard	83	75	76	77	74
Commended	43	25	21	28	2
Number of students tested	134	125	131	100	97
4. (specify subgroup): White					
Met Standard	94	86	87	83	89
Commended	53	37	32	32	26
Number of students tested	162	152	155	133	144

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Texas Education Agency

Publisher: Texas Education Agency with Pearson Assessments

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	96	96	93	91	90
Commended	61	62	46	49	38
Number of students tested	386	348	376	322	318
Percent of total students tested	99	95	97	98	93
Number of students alternatively assessed		12			16
Percent of students alternatively assessed		3			5
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	94	91	91	86	78
Commended	53	47	32	39	22
Number of students tested	178	152	169	137	111
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African American					
Met Standard	91	95	88	86	81
Commended	56	50	37	29	32
Number of students tested	70	58	75	72	68
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Met Standard	96	94	95	87	85
Commended	52	49	32	47	28
Number of students tested	134	124	132	98	96
4. (specify subgroup): White					
Met Standard	98	97	95	95	96
Commended	71	77	61	60	47
Number of students tested	163	152	155	132	142

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Texas Education Agency

Publisher: Texas Education Agency with Pearson Assessments

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	89	84	80	68	73
Commended	22	19	12	12	6
Number of students tested	345	381	327	358	323
Percent of total students tested	99	95	96	97	94
Number of students alternatively assessed		16	3	2	13
Percent of students alternatively assessed		4	1	1	4
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	83	79	77	52	55
Commended	19	14	8	11	4
Number of students tested	151	174	142	140	111
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African American					
Met Standard	77	81	68	49	63
Commended	19	18	6	9	3
Number of students tested	57	77	78	68	63
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Met Standard	88	79	76	66	51
Commended	22	13	13	14	2
Number of students tested	120	136	107	114	82
4. (specify subgroup): White					
Met Standard	93	90	89	75	87
Commended	23	24	15	12	8
Number of students tested	152	153	123	165	166

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Texas Education Agency

Publisher: Texas Education Agency with Pearson Assessments

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	95	92	87	86	82
Commended	41	33	25	23	17
Number of students tested	352	380	330	361	327
Percent of total students tested	99	95	96	97	94
Number of students alternatively assessed		16	3	2	13
Percent of students alternatively assessed		4	1	1	4
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	93	86	82	77	71
Commended	33	18	18	16	9
Number of students tested	155	173	143	141	113
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African American					
Met Standard	92	88	85	76	76
Commended	34	20	19	16	13
Number of students tested	61	76	81	70	62
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Met Standard	96	86	78	80	66
Commended	32	18	16	17	4
Number of students tested	122	136	106	113	83
4. (specify subgroup): White					
Met Standard	95	98	94	93	93
Commended	50	52	35	29	25
Number of students tested	153	153	124	167	169

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 8 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Texas Education Agency

Publisher: Texas Education Agency with Pearson Assessments

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	94	81	76	67	68
Commended	26	17	14	11	13
Number of students tested	367	316	341	321	228
Percent of total students tested	99	96	95	93	88
Number of students alternatively assessed		11	13	15	21
Percent of students alternatively assessed		3	4	4	8
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	91	75	68	52	51
Commended	19	13	13	5	6
Number of students tested	166	140	139	124	102
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African American					
Met Standard	88	70	61	53	58
Commended	12	10	8	5	0
Number of students tested	68	69	71	66	50
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Met Standard	96	77	72	51	56
Commended	25	15	12	3	11
Number of students tested	135	107	106	89	85
4. (specify subgroup): White					
Met Standard	95	88	85	81	87
Commended	32	20	19	17	21
Number of students tested	149	120	150	154	84

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Texas Education Agency

Publisher: Texas Education Agency with Pearson Assessments

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	Mar	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	99	93	87	87	87
Commended	68	53	45	37	23
Number of students tested	364	320	348	322	228
Percent of total students tested	99	96	95	93	88
Number of students alternatively assessed		11	13	15	21
Percent of students alternatively assessed		3	4	4	8
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	98	86	78	78	80
Commended	60	48	39	28	13
Number of students tested	168	142	141	125	101
2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): African American					
Met Standard	100	89	80	81	58
Commended	62	46	38	28	0
Number of students tested	65	70	74	64	50
3. (specify subgroup): Hispanic					
Met Standard	98	90	80	75	56
Commended	63	48	45	25	11
Number of students tested	136	108	106	87	85
4. (specify subgroup): White					
Met Standard	100	97	95	95	87
Commended	74	62	49	47	21
Number of students tested	149	122	154	158	84

Notes: